

Audience 14

If man was a gift in Genesis 2 did he really live as a gift in his original solitude? Although man was in original happiness, both God and man pointed out that man was alone instead of stressing the beautiful gift that the Creator had given to the created. We have looked at original solitude, but now we must look at a lack of good that exists in it. It was not good that man should be alone. "I will make him a helper" God said, and Adam waited for a helper fit for him. No other part of creation gave man the conditions necessary for him to live in a relationship of mutual giving.

The words "alone" and "helper" are the key to understanding the meaning of "gift" at the human level, and as the truth about man being made "in the image of God". This shows us one of the real meanings of being a person. or a "gift" .By saying it was not good that man was alone, He was saying that man was incomplete, and that he will only be complete when he lives with and for another.

This "norm of existence" through these two words is shown as a fundamental and essential part of human existence for man in the relationship of the communion of persons. This communion of persons fulfills "man's" original solitude. Mankind lived in original solitude both before and after the creation of woman. The communion of persons means each person living for, and giving to, the other. Man being a gift for woman, and vice versa.

The fulfillment of "man's" original solitude at the beginning, was pure happiness.. And was part of the mystery of creation brought about by God's love which was part of His giving in creation. Since this was so from the beginning, it shows "man" as being different from the rest of creation. This difference is also seen in the differences from the beginning in the human male and female – the difference between man and woman as persons different from other mammalian, and man and woman as male and female in their gender. To understand "man", we have to understand both the "person" and their sexuality.

There is a link between our creation by God from love as a gift, and our existence as male and female both in our bodies as well as our sexuality, and that is the communion of persons. When Adam said "this is bone of my bone" etc., he validated the identity of both. Basically he was saying, here is a body that expresses or shows the person.

The body shows the person. In other words the body reveals the soul – the fullness of what man became when God breathed life into him - the body and soul which made him different (in solitude) from everything else. When man crossed from original solitude by himself to original solitude with woman, they became a mutual gift to each other, and the expression of that gift is the human body in its masculinity and femininity.

The body evidences the mutual exchange of the gift and the communion of persons. The body which is a witness of creation as a gift and therefore a witness to love is the source of all giving. Masculinity and femininity – sex – is a sign of creative giving, and the awareness of this by man (male/female) is the awareness of a gift lived in an original way. This is why sex enters the theology of the body.

We can understand this beginning of existence as male and female through what was revealed to us. And what we discovered at the beginning can be called "nuptial" We can see this through the Yahwist texts as well as the way we live.

We have seen that man's creation as male and female (Gn 2:23) is followed immediately by conjugal unity (cf Gn. 2:24) and then by mutual nakedness without shame (Gn 2:25). This shows us the relationship between the revelation and discovery of the "nuptial" meaning of the body. This relationship confirms the creative giving from love which has now come to man's knowledge and understanding. Man experiences it as a mutual giving which is free from shame.

Genesis 2:24 tells us of the ultimate meaning of masculinity and femininity, the uniting of husband and wife in the one flesh union., fertility and procreation, and although man is aware of his/her sexuality, man is "free from the constraints" of his/her own body and sex.

Man is free from sexual instinct. He is the only one in creation who has the choice in his sexuality and fertility. Unlike animals, man has a conscience, and the freedom to choose as opposed to acting merely from instinct. This raises man to the level of being "in the image of God" in the sense of both man and animals, but more than the animals, to a level of the person and the communion between persons.